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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Additional information submitted by States parties to the Covenant following the consideration of their reports by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Addendum

PARAGUAY*

[10 December 1998]

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* At the 1st, 2nd and 4th meetings of its fourteenth session, held on 30 April and 1 May 1996 (E/C.12/1996/SR.1, 2 and 4), the Committee considered the initial report of Paraguay concerning rights covered in articles 1 to 15 of the Covenant (E/1990/5/Add.23).

The Government of Paraguay has submitted additional information which relates to the consideration of its report by the Committee and is reproduced in the present document.

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Committee's observation

Please provide more detailed and complete information about the legislation enacted to give effect to the Constitution in all areas related to the Covenant, specific programmes designed to implement the Covenant and, as far as possible, the results achieved.

Government reply

1. The implementation and results of government activities in areas related to the Covenant and Constitution are described below.

Labour

2. During the period from July 1996 to March 1997, the Ministry of Justice and Labour finalized significant plans and projects provided for in the Government's programme. Substantial progress was made in areas within the Ministry's competence and responsibility, which stimulate institutional development and enabled the most pressing and urgent problems to be solved.

3. The nationwide dialogue between workers, employers and the State was resumed in 1996 on the Government's initiative, through the Ministry of Justice and Labour; tripartite meetings were held in the forums considered to be the most effective for arriving at viable solutions, and the foundations were laid for more harmonious relations. The parties worked out satisfactory solutions for more than 60 per cent of the problems raised.

4. The monitoring of observance of labour laws constituted an important factor in meeting demands and asserting rights, and raising awareness of compliance with legislation, which results not only in increasing workers' self-respect, but also in improving productivity and relations between the parties, and eliminating potential areas of conflict. Fifty new lines were added to the 1997 budget for labour inspectors, enabling the Ministry to strengthen labour inspection as a whole. Ministry staff were invited to apply for the posts, and training courses were organized by the Paraguayan Institute of Labour Studies in order to enable them to perform their duties effectively.

5. In a significant development, medical insurance and family allowances for government workers were included in the general State budget from 1997 onwards and implemented through Decree No. 16,687/97 establishing regulations for Act No. 1,019 "approving the general State budget programmes for the 1997 fiscal year and supplementing the provisions established in article 30 of Decree No. 16,121 concerning health benefits".

6. Vocational training was provided for 34,815 persons during the period from July 1996 to March 1997, through 1,692 courses organized by the National Vocational Development Service (SNPP), an institution which provides special assistance to workers in all socio-economic sectors, including special programmes for persons with special needs.

7. Training was geared primarily to the secondary and tertiary sectors, which together accounted for 94.1 per cent of the Service's courses. The remaining 6 per cent were directed at the primary sector. The SNPP also supported employers' and workers' associations which, being aware of the

importance of training their human resources, organized and set up training centres. As a result, 16 inter-agency cooperation agreements were concluded with government agencies, trade unions and foundations.

8. In November 1996, a second memorandum of cooperation was signed with the Government of Japan for the establishment of the Paraguayan-Japanese Vocational Development Service, with headquarters in San Lorenzo. The project is aimed at strengthening and supplementing the existing vocational training system through the introduction of new technologies in the areas of electricity, electronics, mechatronics, electrical engineering, factory automation, telecommunications, training and updating of instruction manuals.

Labour training by sector

9. In the framework of the project on the establishment of the National Vocational Training System, which is being conducted with the cooperation of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), a project implementing unit was set up. This unit has conducted several awareness-raising events for the principal players involved (businessmen, workers and training institutions).

10. The following took place as part of the process of integration and acquisition of international cooperation: signing of a letter of intent concerning a social security agreement between Spain and Paraguay, March 1997; Madrid Declaration, January 1997; advisory assistance from the Ibero-American Social Security Organization for specific projects in this area in the context of Working Sub-Group 10 of the Common Market of the Southern Cone (MERCOSUR), which was of vital importance during the interim presidency; cooperation from the International Labour Organization on subjects such as inspection and monitoring, negotiation of labour issues within MERCOSUR, Employment Observatory and establishment of a tripartite organ to deal with wage and employment-related issues. Mention should also be made of the cooperation provided by other officials in the labour field, especially the Ministers of Labour of Argentina and Uruguay, on topics such as the inter-American inspection and monitoring regulations.

Education

11. Education is undergoing far-reaching changes as the educational reform has been strengthened through the execution of the Programme for the Improvement of the Quality of Primary Education. This has coincided with the incipient improvement of secondary education.

12. A strategic plan, "Paraguay 2020: Working together to meet the educational challenge" aims at strengthening the competitiveness of the labour force and consolidating the democratic path of development in Paraguay. Its two priority areas are: basic education in schools and general basic education for all.

13. The activities conducted at the different levels and within the different components of the education system are described below.

Basic education in schools

Implementation of educational reform in the classroom pre-school to fourth grade in the Spanish and Guaraní-speaking programmes;

Promotion of learning circles as an ongoing human resources training strategy;

Expansion of school and non-school pre-primary education (day-care centres and kindergartens), which increased by approximately 22.35 per cent during the 1995-1997 period;

Implementation of innovative experiments, such as the Schools of the Future programmes in the following departments: Central, Cordillera, Caaguazú, Itapúa, Misiones, Ñembucú and Canindeyú;

Active School programme, under which 10 schools in the Department of Caaguazú were strengthened, and which was extended to 10 more schools in the Department of President Hayes and a further 10 in the Department of Caaguazú;

Ongoing assistance for indigenous people and rural settlements in terms of budget appropriations for teachers, infrastructure and school equipment;

Expansion of programmes for the integration of children with special classroom needs;

Strengthening of supervisory skills and management of subject areas to improve teacher performance and results and, consequently, educational quality;

Allocation of 3,785 new budget lines in the LP1 category for primary schoolteachers and 200 lines in the L50 category for heads of primary schools, to increase primary education coverage;

Selection of teachers through district commissions, as a means of decentralizing education;

Course in school administration for supervisors and head of department in Alto Paraná, Canindeyú, Concepción, Itapúa, San Pedro and Amambay;

Refresher courses in Guaraní for teachers, with participation by experts in basic education in schools, to improve their teaching skills in the mother tongue;

Strengthening of the learning circles, with the participation of a specialist in the training of trainers;

Development of the educational baccalaureate course for non-qualified teachers in the Departments of Canindeyú and Alto Paraná;

Refresher courses for teachers in Alto Paraná and Canindeyú;

Strengthening of the Guaraní-language programme through courses for coordinators and teachers;

Training in environmental education for teachers and supervisors in the capital and Central Department, in areas such as waste treatment and improvement of the quality of life;

National test applied to pupils of public and private-sector educational establishments, to evaluate the variables affecting quality of education;

Participation of supervisors and heads in the development of a project entitled "Improving the quality of secondary education" (MECES), with due coordination with primary education;

Implementation of the programme on the improvement of information quality and development of a data-processing plan through the Department of Educational Planning;

Several activities were conducted with support from international organizations, in the framework of different projects aimed at strengthening the educational reform:

(a) Distribution of learning guides to second and third-grade pupils;

(b) Printing of teaching materials for the school and non-school pre-primary education;

(c) 4,000 triptychs;

(d) 11,000 copies of the national pre-primary education programme;

(e) 5,000 copies of the coordination programme in the framework of basic education in schools;

Publicity campaign for the reform and development of community participation through workshops, to improve the educational community's self-management and management skills;

Strengthening of supervision in the education field, through a workshop/seminar attended by 100 primary school supervisors, and a management course for supervisors at the primary level (first cycle), attended by 85 supervisors;

Achievement tests were organized in mathematics, communication and composition to determine pupils' levels of attainment. A total of 14,746 pupils in 404 schools throughout the country took the tests, which were organized under an agreement between the Ministry of Education and IDB to improve pre-school and primary education under the National System for the Evaluation of the Educational Process (SNEPE);

The Department of Educational Planning organized the compilation of nationwide statistics based on area, level and type of education, which were used to prepare various publications on the development of the national educational system, based on ongoing statistics, information supplied by the Educational Map and sectoral research:

(a) Statistical yearbook (1995);

(b) Statistical bulletins (1995);

(c) Triptychs containing statistics on the education system (1995);

(d) Projection of educational demand within the education system (1995);

(e) Preparation of 2,000 copies of the National Educational Map; and

(f) National report, entitled "The Development of Education", prepared for the forty-fifth session of the International Conference on Education, organized by the Geneva-based International Bureau of Education;

Design of the Educational Statistics Information System aimed at modernizing the educational information system, under the MECES programme, whose main objective is to help improve the decision-making and management capacity of the Ministry of Education. 1/

Secondary education

The following activities have been undertaken under the MECES programme:

Training in the educational reform for heads and technical staff, to enable them to train other trainers;

Training in the educational reform for heads, by trainers;

Training in the educational reform for teachers, by heads;

Implementation, on an experimental basis, of the Innovative School Projects (PIEs) in the departments of Caaguazú and San Pedro, with the participation of 40 schools;

Opening of 707 courses with budgetary provision in 142 secondary schools;

Assignment of human resources to strengthen area supervisors' offices with the addition of 38 posts including coordinators, assessors, secretaries and assistants in 16 supervision areas;

Preparation of a handbook for the implementation of the PIEs and materials for the training of heads and project coordinators.

Continuing education for young people and adults

Establishment of 10 integrated community action centres in the department of Cordillera (Itacurubí, Atyrá, Caacupé, Eusebio Ayala and Piribebuy) designed to strengthen community culture and promote development and work through education. They are currently at the first stage, which consists of activities such as district meetings, discussion of local problems, prioritizing of needs and promotion of self-management;

Strengthening of the subsystem for the education of young people and adults, composed of 23 government and community organizations (REDALF - Paraguay);

Reorganization of the Department of Adult Literacy and Education as the Directorate-General for the Continuing Education of Young People and Adults;

Preparation of a Bilingual Programme (PALBI) for adults;

Preparation of modules for basic education with part-time classroom attendance (DAEA/HARVARD);

Design and implementation of a research project on "Educational demand among Paraguayan youth" (Ministry of Education/UNESCO/UNDP);

Preparation of social investment projects, such as:

Educating parents to educate their children;

Literacy and post-literacy studies for women;

Distance education (basic) linked to gainful work;

Budgetary provision for the establishment of community education and culture centres for the districts of Villa Elisa, Lambaré and Luque;

"Basic education for women, a challenge for our time";

Provision of equipment and materials for vocational training programmes in the districts of Villa Elisa, Lambaré and Luque;

Provision of teaching resources for youth and adult education programmes in the districts of Villa Elisa, Lambaré and Luque;

Preparation of teaching materials related to different aspects of the curriculum (mental health, environment, drug addiction, alcoholism and AIDS);

Preparation of reading material for use in basic education (Guaraní-Spanish).

Special education

At the pre-school, basic school and secondary levels and in the continuing education programme for young people and adults, 8,245 special-needs pupils received instruction under the Special Education Programme, a 68 per cent increase over the 1995 academic year;

New special education programmes and services were established and others expanded: creation of 341 budget lines for teachers and three centres opening in the communities of Itá, San Pedro and Ciudad del ESE;

Seventy-seven special and support classes are functioning in 43 regular schools in San Pedro, Cordillera, Guairá, Caaguazú, Misiones, Paraguarí, Alto Paraná, Central, Amambay and Chaco;

Construction and maintenance of 10 special education institutions in the capital and the provinces;

Provision of equipment and materials to 12 institutions in the capital and the provinces;

Training of 4,415 pre-school, primary and special education teachers, and teacher training in subjects related to prevention, care and integration for special-needs pupils through 35 courses, seminars and workshops at the national level;

First National Forum on Special Education, with the participation of 600 teachers;

Technical specialization in specific learning difficulties for 15 teachers in regular and special schools;

Ten regional workshops for 485 regular and special education teachers, heads and supervisors;

Joint research, with the Harvard University Institute for Higher Education and Technical Cooperation, on teaching strategies for the development of reasoning and creative thinking in 15 selected schools in the towns of San Bernardino, Altos, Caacupé, Valenzuela, Tobatí and Caraguatay;

Strengthening of departmental commissions for the development of activities in support of persons with special needs, in coordination with departmental governments and municipalities.

Technical education

Agreement between the Ministry of Education and the Paraguayan Industrial Union for 240 hours of supervised traineeships;

Joint project of the Ministry of Education and the National University of Asunción comprising refresher courses in the use of information technology for teachers of mathematics, physical sciences and chemistry;

Assessment of electronics curriculum and appropriate programme adjustments;

Reorganization of commercial baccalaureate syllabuses and curricula for conversion to a technical baccalaureate in accounting introduced during the period 1994-1996 and culminating in the first class graduating in this subject and the extension of the programme to the national level to cover approximately 200 schools throughout the country, with syllabuses and curricula geared specifically to day and night shifts;

Establishment of enterprise councils in five technical education and vocational training institutions;

Linking of educational institutions with 790 firms for supervised traineeships covering 2,415 trainees during the period 1995-1997, 362 of whom have been hired by the firms in which they trained;

Preparation of the re-equipment of workshops and laboratories project, which will cover 131 educational institutions throughout the country and for which a line of credit is being negotiated with the Government of Spain;

Over 1,000 hours of refresher training for teachers in vocational training institutes in the areas of tailoring, dressmaking, handicrafts and hairdressing.

Education at the regional level

Diversification of education at the secondary level through the creation of the technical baccalaureate;

Teacher training under the Educational Reform Plan, aimed especially at fourth-grade teachers and heads of primary schools;

Introduction of the new secondary education assessment system in the seven Regional Education Centres;

Effective involvement of parents in educational activities through the establishment of parents' committees for the improvement of educational standards;

Training of experts from the Department of Regional Education in the educational reform;

Fitting-out of a wing in the Saturio Rios Regional Teacher-Training Centre in San Lorenzo with six classrooms and offices;

Call for tenders and award of a contract for the construction of a wing with six classrooms at Clementina Irrazabal school, General Patricio Escobar Regional Education Centre, in the city of Encarnación and construction of:

Rooms for a computer laboratory at the Saturio Rios Regional Education Centre;

Three classrooms at Tomaza Ferreira de Mesa School, Saturio Rios Regional Education Centre;

One classroom-workshop at Franklin Delano Roosevelt School;

Two classrooms at the Dr. Raúl Peña Regional Education Centre in the city of Pedro Juan Caballero for the technical baccalaureate course;

Classrooms in Marshal Francisco Solano López school, Dr. Raúl Peña Regional Education Centre;

Computer laboratory and classrooms for the technical baccalaureate course at the Juan E. O'Leary Regional Education Centre in Concepción.

Health

14. There was rapid growth in the provision of health care in the context of the democratization and decentralization process, with active participation by departmental and municipal governments and community organizations.

15. In the Government's view, there is a need to improve intersectoral coordination mechanisms and develop closer relations with the various protagonists in society.

16. The principal activities undertaken were as follows:

Health coverage in the form of consultations, hospitalization and vaccinations increased by about 10 per cent, reaching 3,250,000 Paraguayans;

Under the Strategic Plan for Social Development, medical assistance was provided to 127 settlements in the departments of Concepción, San Pedro and Caaguazú and to 13 groups in the periurban area of the capital. Training was given to 2,000 volunteer health educators from rural indigenous communities and 216 traditional birth attendants, in cooperation with peasant organizations;

In conjunction with the United Nations Human Development Programme and the Jazmín Foundation, mobile teams were set up to implement prevention and treatment programmes; these included the "Pap-Móvil" and "Odonto-Móvil" teams and the "Health Train", which brought free services closer to the various communities, without people needing to leave their place of work or residence;

Attention continued to be focused on vulnerable population groups in rural and indigenous settlements, but also included, during this period, services in the outskirts of Asunción, which were reorganized and rescaled, as they had fallen out of step with the actual demographic situation and the demand for services. Eighty-four new clinics and eight health centres were built, and six maternal-child hospitals were

equipped around the country. The inhabitants of San Lorenzo, Fernando de la Mora, Limpio Mariano R. Alonso, Loma Pytá and Lambaré have been provided with district hospitals;

The building housing the National Institute of Nutrition was inaugurated and the Institute began its work as a national reference centre for nutrition-related matters;

In the area of social welfare, 26 day-care centres were opened in workplaces at the community level, to provide support for working mothers and foster the children's psychological and social development. There are currently 86 day-care centres caring for 6,250 children. There is undoubtedly a need for a further increase in coverage, which will be introduced gradually through the Secretariat for Social Action (Office of the President of the Republic) and through community organizations;

Under the Essential Medical Supplies Programme, 97 new pharmacies were established and equipped in low-income communities; they are administered by community organizations. There are a total of 432 community pharmacies in operation. Thus efforts have focused not only on the most disadvantaged sectors and regions, but also on encouraging community participation;

The National Pre-Hospital Medical Emergency Service has performed outstanding work at the national level; its staff have regularly been present at various events attended by large numbers of people and have been active in preventive health care. In the past year, 33 new ambulances were added to make up the shortage in this area of assistance. From the 23 existing ambulances in 1993, 154 are now available for emergency service;

The National Institute of Health has done exceptional work in the training of health technicians; 994 were trained in the areas of health education, nursing, obstetrics, laboratory work and pharmacology. Training courses for specialists in public health have been held, from which 17 students have graduated; 30 students are currently enrolled in similar courses. There has also been a course for specialists in hospital administration, which was attended by 35 students Postgraduate courses have also been held. In 1996, 21 persons were trained in health services administration;

Government plans and activities continue to give priority to maternal and child health-care programmes: two major projects for strengthening maternal and child care and for the decentralization and modernization of health services management were approved. One of the agreements was with the World Bank, in the amount of $30,830,660, to be implemented over the next five years in the departments of Concepción, San Pedro, Alto Paraná, Amabay, Canendiyú and Alto Paraguay. The other agreement was concluded with IDB, in the amount of $55 million, to be implemented in the departments of Cordillera, Guairá, Caaguazú, Paraguarí and Central. The two projects will provide access to health care for 3,476,320 low-income inhabitants;

Programmes for the prevention and treatment of certain priority diseases ensured permanent monitoring as needed. Mention may be made of the following:

The National Programme to Combat AIDS, which analysed 123,394 blood samples and detected 148 cases; 1,350 AIDS victims and HIV carriers were treated with free drugs valued at approximately 1,500 million guaraníes, according to the 1996 budget;

Action to combat tuberculosis and leprosy was also strengthened through continuous provision of the necessary medicines, along the lines recommended by the international organizations;

Although there were no outbreaks of cholera, there is an ongoing campaign to prevent cases in the most vulnerable communities. Under the programme, 9,426 planes were inspected at Asunción Airport and 33,269 coaches at terminals and frontier posts.

There was an increased incidence of vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles; 63 cases of measles were recorded in 1998, for example, and these are being countered by mass immunization programmes organized by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare;

The immunization programmes maintained their coverage, thereby preventing epidemics. Immunization campaigns were conducted to prevent measles and rabies; these campaigns receive the cooperation of all the active forces of the community and the international cooperation agencies;

In 1996, spraying and monitoring were undertaken in 50,151 cases in the eastern region and 4,865 properties were treated in the western region to prevent vector-borne diseases such as malaria, dengue, yellow fever and Chagas' disease. Specimens from suspects were examined for laboratory diagnosis and treatment. In the case of malaria, 35,389 samples were taken, 171 proving positive. Of 400 samples to test for Chagas' disease, 37 were positive. It can therefore be stated that there are no epidemics in our country;

Special attention was paid to environmental health with the installation, during the 1996/97 term of government, of 66 new drinking water systems benefiting some 40,000 persons. A total of 21,348 latrines were built to provide for the needs of approximately 106,740 people. Inspections were made in 446 factories and 26 waste-water treatment projects were evaluated. With regard to occupational health, 217 reports of unsanitary conditions in factories were followed up;

At the MERCOSUR Ministerial Meeting, attention was focused on the pursuit of joint efforts, chiefly under the "Frontier Health Programme". A new Working Sub-Group (No. 11) was set up in the context of the MERCOSUR negotiations to address sectoral issues;

At the international level, the country rejoined the Executive Committee of the Pan-American Health Organization after an absence of more than 25 years;

Sectoral transformation was reinforced with the promulgation of Act No. 1032/96, which creates a national health system centred on a policy of democratization and decentralization, together with the participation of organized society, as part of measures to raise the standard of public health. The National Health Council was reorganized in line with the requirements of the Act and local government authorities were encouraged to establish the proposed organizational structures. There are now 14 regional or departmental health councils and 74 local or district health councils.

Housing

17. The following measures were taken in 1996/97 under the housing programme with IDB subsidies:

In 1996, a total of 3,798 direct housing subsidy certificates were provided for the purchase, renovation, extension or construction of dwellings, with 2,147 plans being implemented;

Rediscounting of mortgages for final beneficiaries and private building firms to provide 2,364 dwellings;

Since the commencement of this programme in 1995, 15 projects to provide 2,359 residential units have been implemented;

A total of 6,000 mortgage loans for housing were arranged through the Inter-American Housing Bank and enterprises within the savings and loan system;

Restructuring of the National Housing Council (CONAVI) for the introduction of a new operational procedure with IDB;

Provisional approval of private investment projects for housing under construction, which provided for 9,765 residential units and 440 privately-owned dwellings with direct housing subsidies;

Refinancing of loans for dwellings built by CONAVI during the period 1990-1995 to bring the financial terms of credit facilities into line with the actual capacity to pay of the final beneficiaries and to reduce arrears in the loans portfolio.

International cooperation

18. Paraguay maintains relations of bilateral and multilateral technical cooperation with various countries, including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Germany, Israel, Japan, Korea, Spain, Taiwan and the United Kingdom. Other countries also support national development through non-governmental organizations. These are seeking to contribute to the process of democratic transition and are currently involved in 151 projects with non-reimbursable

funding totalling approximately $279 million; there are also about 70 experts and 80 volunteers in the country engaged in activities connected with the transfer of know-how and technology.

19. Aid programmes are intended to consolidate the new constitutional system, as well as social programmes, the development of technical assistance projects, the supply of equipment, human resources development, strengthening of the productive sectors, improvement of the environment, conservation of natural resources and the modernization of public administration.

20. With international technical assistance, the population's living standards are being enhanced, ecosystems are now better protected and managed, and efforts are being made to ensure a more secure and prosperous future.

21. The main priority areas are:

Childhood and disability;

Basic education and training;

Health;

Basic sanitation;

Natural resources and environment;

Agriculture and sustainable rural development;

Strengthening of State institutions;

Commerce and industry.

Committee's observation

What is the position of the Government on the recommendations of the World Conference on Human Rights concerning the elaboration of an Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to permit the submission of complaints relating to the violation of rights covered by the Covenant?

Government reply

22. An Optional Protocol to the Covenant has not as yet been elaborated to permit the submission of complaints relating to violations of such rights.

Committee's observation

What legal effect has been given to article 64 of the Constitution, regarding the system of land ownership by indigenous peoples?

Government reply

23. To comply with the provisions of Chapter V of the Constitution ("On Indigenous Peoples"), the Paraguayan Government took the following measures in 1996/97:

Legalization of land occupied by indigenous peoples. Responses were given to 23 requests, involving a total of 83,651 hectares, for communities in the eastern and western regions;

Recognition of the legal personality of eight communities and enrolment of 36 leaders in the Register of Indigenous Communities, as provided for by the Indigenous Statute Act (No. 904/81);

Support for the production of food for own consumption and improvement of educational and health standards. These measures were carried out under the accords and agreements entered into by Paraguay, which attach priority to meeting the requirements of indigenous peoples;

Implementation of technical assistance programmes for agriculture and health care in the Mbya and Tabyterá communities covered by the "Cuero Fresco-Concepción" projects, and also the projects for the consolidation of rural settlements, the Coronel Oviedo-Mbutuy and Concepción-Pedro Juan Caballero highways, and the indigenous component of the regional programme in the Itapúa area;

International tendering was invited for the implementation of the Indigenous Environmental Impact Mitigation Programme in the Guairá, Caaguazú, Canindeyú and San Pedro areas. The indigenous component includes regularization of land tenure, reafforestation, expansion of productive activities, preventive medicine and treatment, and formal and informal education;

Some 12,000 kilograms of staple foods were distributed to more than 29 communities in Bajo Chaco and part of Chaco Central, where indigenous people are being helped to establish small farms to produce subsistence crops;

More than 30 communities were provided with basic farming implements at a cost of 16,350,370 guaraníes. The National Animal Health Service (SENASA) helped to sink 20 wells to supply water to 17 indigenous communities in the eastern region and 15 communities in the Chaco area. 2/

24. With regard to the restitution of land to indigenous peoples, on 17 March 1998 the Paraguayan Institute for Indigenous Peoples acquired and transferred by public deed an area of 21,000 hectares, with 4,400 m² in the district of Pozo Colorado-Santa Juanita, to the Lamenxay and Kayleyhapopyet communities, both belonging to the Enxet-Sanapaná people.

25. The land was formally handed over at a ceremony on 28 July 1998 attended by senior representatives of world human rights bodies, including the Vice-President and Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, who said: "This is the first time that a Government has purchased and returned ancestral land to the indigenous community".

26. At the same ceremony, the head of the Paraguayan Institute for Indigenous Peoples undertook to send experts to advise the new occupants on

how to develop agriculture to the maximum extent, since this is a zone with abundant water and vegetation. The new settlement will accommodate more than 200 families. 3/

Committee's observation

If any discrimination - legal or de facto - persists, please indicate the obstacles that have prevented the elimination of such discrimination and the practical steps the Government intends to take in order to achieve full equality of rights between the two sexes, including women from the ethnic minorities.

Government reply

De facto discrimination

27. Cases of de facto discrimination based on traditional practices still persist in Paraguay, especially in the interior, where it is largely believed that it is women who must take care of the domestic sphere, i.e. perform tasks in the home, for which no formal education is required.

28. Likewise at the national level, there are cases of discrimination against unmarried female pupils and teachers who, because of pregnancy, are expelled from private religious schools or, exceptionally, from State educational institutions on the ground that they may have a bad influence on other pupils. The same risk is run by children of unmarried parents in religious schools, who have to produce a family record book and a certificate of filiation of both parents for the purpose of enrolment; in the event of failure to meet these requirements they are not admitted.

29. Another form of discrimination is the low percentage of women in public office, the majority of such positions being held by men, although the health and education portfolios in the new National Government are held by women. In both the public and the private sector, women do not have equal opportunities with men as regards promotion, and there is discrimination in the terms of employment imposed by some private enterprises, which prefer to hire men because they do not have to grant maternity leave.

Legislative discrimination

30. On the basis of the Constitution and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, ratified by Paraguay in 1986, reforms are being made in various branches of law, such as those concerning civil equality, labour equality and the status of citizens' rights. These forms of equality have now been given equal importance, notably as regards legislation, but not in terms of actual opportunities. Paraguay also includes the issue of gender in the full panoply of its laws, as well as in proposed legislation, such as the draft Code on Children and Adolescents, which in its second paragraph states: "For the purposes of this law, a person shall be considered to be a child until he or she reaches the age of 18. In case of doubt or dispute regarding his or her age, the person shall be presumed to have the status of a child or adolescent."

31. The General Education Act (No. 1,264), passed on 25 May 1998, states in article 10: "Education shall conform basically to the following principles: (a) Effective equality between the sexes and rejection of discrimination of any kind."

32. The Civil Code (Act No. 806/96) and the amendments thereto, the Penal Code (Act No. 1,160/97), due to enter into force on 1 November 1998, and the Code of Criminal Procedure, approved on 26 May 1998 and due to enter into force on 1 July 1999, together constitute a new departure in the field of law relating to women. Matters still pending, however, include the need for a special law to eradicate violence against women. Paraguay ratified the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women in 1995, but this is a framework instrument which needs to be supplemented with appropriate laws and regulations.

33. Updating the Health Code is a priority need, since the Code has a bearing on the overall health of women and the family and reproductive rights.

Government measures

34. The only way to overcome obstacles to women's participation in the benefits of development is through joint action by the State and civil society. With this in mind, the Secretariat for Women within the Office of the President of the Republic has signed a tripartite agreement with the United Nations system and the Office of the Coordinator for Women in Paraguay for the purpose of undertaking joint measures to make further progress in the implementation of the Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in September 1995.

35. In this same context, the Secretariat for Women has formulated, and is now implementing, the National Plan on Equal Opportunities for Women, 1997-2001. This Plan is the outcome of a joint review involving representatives of the public and private sectors. It also reflects the views of the non-governmental organizations which participated from the outset in its formulation. Although the initiative was launched by the Secretariat for Women, the Plan concerns all Paraguayans, men and women. The application of the measures set forth therein is, moreover, the responsibility of the State at the national, regional and local levels.

36. With the adoption of this Plan, the State supports and pledges itself publicly to goals and measures to secure the observance of human rights and greater equality for women.

37. Furthermore, the education reform, which began in 1993, now covers the first six years of basic schooling and includes sex equality among its objectives and guidelines. The first national seminar on gender issues in education was therefore held in 1997, in the context of the project on equal opportunities and achievements for women in education, which is itself part of the programme of that name being pursued by the Ministry of Education to promote a cross-sectoral gender-based approach to the entire teaching and learning process, initially through standard-setting and training activities. It is thereby contributing to the attainment of the stated objectives of the educational reform.

38. In the field of work, it should be noted that it is still easier for men than women, even though both may have the same abilities, to obtain employment. Wages and salaries continue to be unequal as between men and women with equal ability. As a result, women turn to the informal sector, working in domestic service or performing other menial or degrading tasks. The Secretariat for Women has signed an agreement with the Ministry of Justice and Labour to make formal arrangements for a joint effort which has been at the planning stage for the past three years.

39. In 1997, studies, seminars and group discussions were held on the topic of women and work, both at the national level and within MERCOSUR. In this context, it was agreed that Paraguay should be the venue for the Second MERCOSUR Women's Forum.

40. Support was given for small businesswomen and women trade unionists by maintaining a permanent link with the Ministry of Justice and Labour, the Ministry of Integration, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, and the International Labour Organization.

41. Under an agreement between the National Service for Vocational Development and the Secretariat for Women, aimed at improving the training of women and securing their greater integration into the labour market, encouragement was given to participation in various training courses at different levels; 40 per cent of those attending the courses were women.

42. With regard to health, the National Reproductive Health and Family Planning Council was set up by Presidential Decree. The identification of specific problems, such as teenage pregnancies, AIDS, abortion, maternal mortality, infant mortality and gender inequality, makes it possible for various institutions to engage in work on the topic and for coordination to be arranged between governmental and non-governmental organizations.

43. The National Health System was inaugurated in 1996 with the aim of distributing national resources in the health sector on a fair and equal basis. Decentralization of health care has now commenced through the local authorities in the various departments.

44. Furthermore, the network of the Centre for Initiatives and Advancement for Women, as part of a project receiving financial support from the European Union, is promoting an improvement in the status of women by increasing their active participation in the country's development and thus affording equal opportunities for women to contribute effectively to national economic, social, cultural and political processes, placing special emphasis on rural areas. The project led to the creation of 14 centres offering comprehensive assistance for women. It involves departmental governments, municipalities and organizations of civil society.

45. Also under the auspices of the Secretariat for Women, the Social Welfare Institute has initiated a process of promoting and increasing women's access to land ownership. Accompanying measures for reform of the Agrarian Code are currently under consideration in the National Congress.

46. Lastly, it should be noted that there remain principal subjects of concern that have a bearing on economic, social and cultural issues, such as

the problem of violence against women in all its aspects, including sexual abuse, physical and mental ill-treatment, sexual exploitation of children and sexual harassment at work, which represent a pattern of human rights violations calling for firm and persistent action at the various levels of the State and within civil society.

Ethnic minorities

47. With regard to indigenous women, no information is currently available on any governmental action planned for the eradication of gender-based discrimination.

Committee's observation

It would be of great interest for the Committee to be informed of the strategies referred to in paragraph 127 within the Programme for Economic and Social Development, 1994-1998, and its results and, also, in accordance with the comments made by the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations in its report to the 81st International Labour Conference, whether the principle of equal remuneration for men and women is also applied to the remuneration elements concerning seniority and performance and other wage supplements.

Government reply

48. Article 129 of the Labour Code states: "Rates of remuneration may not establish distinctions of any kind". However, in practice there are inequalities in both opportunities and remuneration to the advantage of men, since the male worker always has the possibility of being promoted and thereby receiving a wage or salary increase.

49. The principle of equal remuneration is thus a part of national positive law which should serve as a benchmark for the determination of wages and salaries in any category, and more especially when considering seniority and merit, although the situation is different in practice. In this connection, there is the likelihood of change with the new proposals for restructuring the whole national system made by the Executive, but only time will tell whether there is the political will to do this.

Committee's observation

With regard to the work of young people and children, please provide information on the measures adopted and future plans to improve the situation, taking into account the fact that Paraguay has ratified many ILO Conventions on the work of minors and, moreover, is a party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Government reply

50. The government measures adopted to this end are as follows: on 18 June 1998, the Ministry of Justice and Labour signed an undertaking with the Director-General of the International Labour Organization, Michel Hansenne, at the 86th International Labour Conference in Geneva, Switzerland, to implement the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour.

51. Apart from eliminating child labour, the programme aims to protect children and adolescents against all forms of economic exploitation that might interfere with their education or be dangerous or harmful to their health and physical, mental or moral development.

52. As regards working street children and adolescents, a very important role is played by the Secretariat for Social Action within the Office of the President of the Republic since it administers the overall care programme for such children and adolescents, one component of which is occupational training under projects that meet the demand for training in specific areas to help adolescents with family responsibilities by giving them an alternative source of income. This programme and others are executed through non-governmental organizations and municipalities, with guidance from an advisory group that meets twice a year and is composed of representatives of various institutions of the public sector and civil society, including representatives of the Organization of Working Children and Adolescents.

Committee's observation

Please provide information on any immediate plans to improve health services in urban or rural areas.

Government reply

53. In the area of health, Paraguay made an important change with the inauguration of the National Health System (approved by Act No. 1032 of 30 December 1996). This Act assigns the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare the task of coordinating health policy (including preventive and curative measures) and, inter alia, creates a network for the decentralization of care and services on the basis of departmental and district health councils responsible for the implementation of policy at the regional and local levels. The councils are made up of community representatives, with wide participation and responsibility for departmental governments and municipalities. Through these councils the aim is to increase the coverage and quality of services and to improve implementation of the various health strategies, in accordance with needs and local resources.

54. At present, health care is provided by the public sector for about 73 per cent of the population (mostly people with low incomes), 17 per cent are covered by the social security system (Social Welfare Institute and other public-sector funds) and 10 per cent avail themselves of private prepaid medical services.

55. Health care was given new momentum in the process of democratization and decentralization with the active participation of local authorities and the organized community. This new momentum enabled common objectives to be achieved in the areas of health promotion, disease prevention and medical treatment through joint action which has, in turn, made possible significant achievements in global terms.

56. The principal activities undertaken were as follows:

(a) There was approximately a 10 per cent increase in the provision of consultations, hospitalization and vaccination services, extending the benefits of health care to 3,250,000 inhabitants;

(b) In the context of the Strategic Plan for Social Development, the Secretariat for Social Action (Office of the President of the Republic) is joining various institutions - the legislature, judiciary, departmental governments, municipalities, political parties, the business sector, trade unions, peasants' organizations, churches and civil society - in efforts to promote public access to the benefits of modernization and the fruits of economic development. In this connection, medical assistance was provided to 127 settlements in the departments of Concepción, San Pedro, Caaguazú and Canendiyú, and also to 13 groups in the periurban area of the capital. Training was given to 2,000 volunteer health workers from rural and indigenous communities and to 216 traditional birth attendants, in cooperation with peasants' organizations;

(c) In conjunction with the United Nations Human Development Programme and the Jazmín Foundation, mobile teams were set up to implement prevention and treatment programmes, including the "Pap-Móvil" and "Odonto-Móvil" teams and the "Health Train", which brought free services closer to the various communities, without people needing to leave their place of work or residence;

(d) Attention continued to be focused on disadvantaged persons in peasant and indigenous settlements, as well as on the improvement, during this period, of services in the outlying neighbourhoods of Asunción, which were reorganized and rescaled because they were out of step with the actual demographic situation and the demand for services. In addition, 84 new clinics and 8 health centres were built, and 6 maternity and children's hospitals were equipped around the country. The inhabitants of San Lorenzo, Fernando de la Mora, Limpio, Mariano R. Alonso, Loma Pytá and Lambaré have district hospitals commensurate with the present size of these cities.

57. The shortage of medical care varies depending on whether the place concerned is the city of Asunción (15.8 per cent) and the departments of Misiones and Guairá (rural area), which report the lowest sickness indicators, or the departments of Pte. Hayes (68.85 per cent), Caaguazú, Paraguarí, Caazapá and Cordillera, which give the higher figures. 4/

Committee's observation

What measures are planned to reduce the high level of maternal mortality, particularly in view of the fact that, according to paragraph 337 of the report, only 25 per cent of pregnant women received early health-care services?

Government reply

58. Recorded maternal mortality is the fourth leading cause of deaths among women aged 15 to 49. According to data from the Ministry of Health, between 1991 and 1995 the maternal mortality rate fell by about 20 per cent nationwide, but with such variations between departments that it is difficult

to identify trends. What can be said, however, is that there are eight health regions with rates above the national average, and this is an indication of the rather widespread nature of the problem. In this respect, it should be pointed out, for example, that the department of Canindeyú has a recorded rate which is twice the national average (34.36 per 1,000), whereas the rate for Asunción (9.99 per 1,000) is 75 per cent of the national average.

59. The situation therefore varies greatly from one department to another and even between the health centres of a particular health region, a fact that reveals problems in the distribution of services or, in other words, a strong imbalance in access to services depending on geographical location. Secondly, it should also be borne in mind that in those places where coverage has improved there may still be problems as regards the quality of care, these must be remedied for better results to be obtained.

60. The recorded maternal mortality rate is related to the reproductive pattern of women and the forms of care provided during pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium, which vary according to both the mother's socio-economic circumstances and the availability of reproductive health and family planning services.

61. According to a 1997 evaluation of Ministry of Health activities relating to reproductive health and family planning, it was found during field visits that barely 30 per cent of women going to a health centre to give birth have had prenatal examinations, the number of check-ups being generally close to the minimum recommended, and only 25 per cent of mothers attend prenatal clinics.

62. A Safe Motherhood Programme has been agreed by UNICEF and the Ministry of Health with the aim of improving the quality of life of mothers and newborn babies.

Overall objectives

63. To reduce the maternal mortality rate by 50 per cent over the period 1995-1997 in order to achieve by 1999 a rate of no higher than 8.3 per 1,000 live births; to reduce neonatal mortality by 50 per cent, from 13 per 1,000 live births; to contribute to reducing low birth weight to less than 10 per cent of babies by 1999.

64. The goals laid down in the overall objectives of the project, especially the reduction in maternal mortality, comply with the outlines set out by the World Summit for Children and the National Plan of Action for Children; Paraguay has not adjusted these goals, since a reduction in maternal mortality by 50 per cent over almost eight years (1991-1999) was the minimum target for maternal health policy over this period. These objectives are part of the National Plan for Reducing Maternal Mortality and the National Plan for Reproductive Health.

65. Although current trends suggest that this goal will be reached by 1999, it must be kept in mind that the birth and death registration systems have serious limitations, which cause the figures to fluctuate from year to year. It should also be remembered that many factors closely linked to maternal mortality in Paraguay, especially socio-economic and cultural factors

influencing hospital care, and risk groups' reluctance to seek help, mean that even where efforts are made, reaching the targets on time is relatively difficult. The goal for 1995 was achieved, but the maternal mortality rate remains one of the highest in the Americas.

66. Cooperation with UNICEF from 1995 to 1997 was considered an important element in the implementation of the National Plan for Reducing Maternal Mortality. Its main contribution was the training of traditional birth attendants who are responsible for approximately 46 per cent of births in Paraguay, the training of health educators through the Ministry of Health, centralized technical support in order to carry out an evaluation of the state of hospitals, and the drawing-up of a strategic plan and technical standards for care. This initiative, named "Thirteen Steps to Safe Motherhood", was started in October 1997.

Specific objective 1

67. To strengthen the capacity of the regional health services and local systems in order to draw up and implement a national plan, "Risk-Free Motherhood 1995-1999".

68. This project is in its initial phase. In view of the fact that the National Plan for Reducing Maternal Mortality could not be implemented, discussions were held at the end of 1996 on the application of the "Safe Motherhood" initiative as an alternative in order to implement on a small scale certain of the components of the National Plan for Reducing Maternal Mortality.

69. At the request of UNICEF, the Directorate-General for Family Health within the Ministry of Health carried out, at the beginning of 1997, an evaluation of the care provided by the major maternity clinics and hospitals in Paraguay. It drew up the "Safe Motherhood" project, targeted at improving the care provided by the health services to pregnant women and newborns. The standard-setting and practical aspects of this programme are being tackled at the moment, and it is envisaged that it will be implemented in three regions from December 1997.

70. Progress has been made in reinforcing technical capacity at the central level, which has facilitated completion of the drawing-up of technical standards and capacity-building; this will give a new focus to the training plan for health service personnel. A technical group has been set up to provide support to the technical and standard-setting parts of the project. The hospital evaluation data are available and point to the need to prioritize three regions.

71. Central management capacity and the shortage of staff for maternal health programmes at this level were determining factors in the slow pace of the process, all the more so since this is a new initiative which at this stage requires broad participation in standard-setting.

72. The evaluation study found that the health services had serious problems in terms of adequately trained staff, compliance with standards, availability of basic inputs and core equipment, and the supply of blood for emergency obstetric operations.

Specific objective 2

73. To increase prenatal monitoring and qualified care of high-risk births in hospitals.

74. Following activities carried out with UNICEF cooperation, health educators and birth attendants were trained to promote early prenatal monitoring and hospital care in cases of high-risk birth.

75. The Directorate-General for Health Promotion and Education carried out a house-to-house campaign in 10 health authority regions in order to promote early recognition of the symptoms of high maternal risk, pneumonia and acute diarrhoeal diseases. The campaign covered 76,000 rural households.

76. The campaign was supported by educational materials (leaflets, posters and stickers) and audio amplification equipment was obtained for 16 regions.

77. It is considered that the educational activities and promotional work carried out by health personnel, birth attendants and health educators helped to achieve the following:

(a) Early diagnosis of pregnancy: 68.7 per cent;

(b) Pregnancy monitoring rate: 88 per cent; and

(c) More than four check-ups: 56 per cent.

78. The neonatal mortality rate fell from 23 to 17 per 1,000, according to Ministry of Heath data.

79. Two of the major problems contributing to the high maternal mortality rate in Paraguay continue to be the quality of prenatal monitoring and the late identification of high-risk pregnancies. The coverage of the house-to-house educational campaign was limited because of the shortage of human resources and insufficient social mobilization.

80. The cost and the problems with quality of health care continue to limit demand for antenatal monitoring and hospital care at birth.

Specific objective 3

81. To reduce by one third the frequency of iron-deficiency anaemia among pregnant women.

82. This objective was developed through the training element of the breastfeeding, birth attendant, and health and nutrition educator projects.

83. Despite prior provisions, iron sulphate was supplied to the Ministry of Health because it was bought by the regional health authorities at their own expense.

84. As it is taught in the university medicine and nursing curriculum, the concept of supplying iron to pregnant women is firmly rooted in the care routine of health workers.

85. Iron distribution has been limited and irregular because of planning problems and the low rate of antenatal monitoring (43 per cent of women receive less than four pregnancy check-ups).

Specific objective 4

86. By 1999, 80 per cent of home births should be assisted by trained birth attendants.

87. The Ministry of Health implemented a successful programme targeted at birth attendants under the name of "Midwives - Friends of Mothers and Babies (PANM)", based on a change of attitude through understanding and application of the following basic messages: timely identification and referral of high-risk pregnant women; promotion of hygienic childbirth; promotion of breastfeeding; recognition of the symptoms of acute respiratory failure or acute diarrhoeal diseases; and promotion of vaccination for mother and child.

88. Technical standards have been drawn up for trainers, and training modules and manuals developed for midwives participating in the PANM project, as well as small cards with simple diagrams to make referencing simpler for women who cannot write.

89. This project has in the past three years trained approximately 985 traditional birth attendants nationally and promoted the use of the hygienic childbirth kit, of which 35,000 have been supplied over the period.

90. The project has been widely welcomed by birth attendants and by the Pastoral Health organization; it was applied in cooperation with the Pastoral Project for Children and the Catholic Church.

91. There has been a notable increase in the number of mothers and newborn babies referred by birth attendants. Ministry of Health studies show that 94 per cent of attendants are able to make timely diagnoses of pregnancy risks and births. The kit is widely used by attendants, including those from indigenous communities.

92. Centralized capacities for aiding the implementation of this initiative have been overwhelmed by the great demand generated by the project in the regions and on an international level among international organizations.

93. Practices aimed at promoting cleanliness and hygienic birth should be emphasized in training, since about 30 per cent of midwives do not use the birth kit and do not follow best practice in cutting the umbilical cord. 5/

Committee's observation

Please provide statistics on the numbers, by sex, of children attending school at the pre-school, primary or basic, secondary and university levels during the past five years. What percentage of school-age children, by sex, remain outside the pre-school, primary and secondary education systems, including street children? To what extent are indigenous languages taught in schools?

Government reply

Pre-school level

94. The average age of children in pre-school education is between 4 and 5 years. Availability of this type of education is still limited and concentrated mainly (75.5 per cent) in urban areas. It is growing every year, however, and between 1992 and 1995 enrolment increased at an annual rate of 19.2 per cent (40.4 per cent in 1992), about six times faster than the rate of population growth.

95. The public sector has seen the greatest increases, providing approximately 60 per cent of places and growing at a rate of about 28.3 per cent. In addition, there has been significant growth at this level in rural areas, which, although accounting for only 24.5 per cent of places, showed an increase of 31 per cent between 1992 and 1995.

96 It should also be borne in mind that, according to Ministry of Education data, equivalent growth for the period 1987-1992 was of the order of 13.7 per cent, which confirms the efforts being made to stimulate pre-school education through the educational reform process.

Primary level

97. Since the educational reform, basic education has been extended to a total of 9 years, from 6 to 15. At present, the educational reform covers the first six years of schooling.

98. Some 91 per cent of children aged between 7 and 12 years are enrolled in primary school.

99. Examination of school enrolment by geographical area for the period 1992-1995 shows that while rural enrolment has improved in absolute terms, it remains lower than urban enrolment.

100. In terms of sectors, the State sector caters for more than 6 per cent of school pupils. As to pupils' sex, there is still a preference for educating boys, who are about 3 per cent more numerous than girls in the school system.

101. In addition to widespread availability, other factors influence the effectiveness of the education system, notably continuity, repetition of years and academic performance; continuity is the area in which greatest progress has been made. Thus, between 1992 and 1995, the percentage of pupils dropping out of primary school fell from 5 to 4 per cent, with the highest frequency in rural areas (5.2 per cent), in State schools (4.6 per cent) and among boys (4.5 per cent). The greatest reduction in the rate of primary drop-out was noted in private schools (2.3 per cent) and in urban areas (3.2 per cent). There were also improvements between 1992 and 1995 in the rate of completion of primary education: it rose from 55 per cent to 58 per cent, with disparities between urban areas (75.8 per cent) and rural areas, where fewer than half the children who begin primary schooling (46.3 per cent) manage to complete it successfully. There is also a difference in completion levels between boys (55.7 per cent) and girls (61.0 per cent). Although girls are disadvantaged in terms of entry into the education system, they are more

successful in terms of completing the cycle and in terms of results. Each year, it can be seen that the highest rate of repetition is between fifth and sixth grades and between first and second grades, the original group with which the reform process began.

102. The level of completion or graduation from the primary system in 1995 was roughly 52 per cent nationwide. If this figure is compared with the percentage who remain in the primary system, the difference between the two is small, but the 52 per cent completion figure is worrying: this means that only 5 out of every 10 boys and girls who begin primary education manage to complete it six years later.

103. The figures for results follow a different pattern from those for completion or repetition: they are lower in urban areas, which means that there is greater coverage and less repetition, and the difference between those who begin the cycle and those who complete it is therefore greater than that recorded for rural areas.

104. According to this information, the expansion of the primary system in urban areas is broader but less effective than in rural areas. Another statistical group which experiences difficulties is boys: less than half of them manage to complete primary education.

Secondary education

105. Although a greater proportion of children (82.2 per cent) continued to be enrolled in urban areas over the period 1992-1995, the growth rate in rural areas was four times higher than in urban areas (35.0 per cent as opposed to 7.9 per cent) owing to the efforts of the private sector, which is expanding two and a half times faster than the State sector (21.0 per cent against 8.4 per cent). There was no significant gender difference.

106. However, the expansion of secondary education in rural areas has not necessarily brought about an improvement in standards. The effect noted was that levels of completion or repetition followed different patterns according to area, being higher in all years for urban areas (54 per cent at end of cycle), whereas a heavy selection process takes place between first and second years in rural areas (57 per cent). The period 1992-1995 saw a growth of some 10 per cent in completion of schooling in rural areas (30 per cent at the end of the 1995 cycle).

107. Among the different branches of the humanities or general baccalaureate, which is the choice of most students, the commercial baccalaureate is decreasing in popularity and technical education is still very poorly developed, in spite of being incorporated in the legislation, and particularly in the light of the training challenges for middle-level, technical and professional personnel set by economic integration projects such as MERCOSUR. The non-formal technical education offered by State and private training centres is of greater interest to the adult population. Indigenous enrolment in secondary education represents a total of 1.7 per cent (2.2 per cent men and 1.2 per cent women).

University education

108. The Statistical Yearbook report for 1996 states that a total of 19,970 people entered university, of whom 9,625 were men and 10,345 were women.

Children remaining outside the education system

109. One of the main reasons why children do not attend school is child labour. Whereas about 9.9 per cent of children and adolescents neither work nor go to school, 36.7 per cent of those who work do not go to school. This is a particular obstacle for girls (43.8 per cent) and probably has more to do with their gender than with their work, since a large number work as maids.

110. Among working children and adolescents attending school, approximately half (47.7 per cent) attend the final years of primary school, a third (29.9 per cent) have attended the first three years of primary school, and very few (22.4 per cent) are to be found at middle or secondary level, even though the educational reform made this free and compulsory.

111. Levels of illiteracy among working children and adolescents are only slightly higher than the average (5.8 per cent) for their age group; however, the average lag in terms of the difference between actual age and level attended is high (65 per cent), so that even if child labour is not in itself a barrier to entry into the school system, it is an obstacle to educational progress.

112. In short, the results for working children aged 7-18 who attend a school of some kind are as follows:

1-3 years of primary schooling	29.30 per cent
4-6 years of primary schooling	47.70 per cent
Secondary schooling	22.40 per cent

Breakdown of the 7-18 age group by educational and work activities:

Only studying	59.80 per cent
Working and studying	21.30 per cent
Only working	12.40 per cent
Neither working nor studying	6.50 per cent

Indigenous languages

113. The educational reform led to the teaching of Guaraní from pre-school through to secondary level by establishing senior posts for the teaching of Guaraní and retraining teachers in mother-tongue education, with the participation of education experts in training courses.

Committee's observation

With respect to teachers, what measures does the Government intend to take to improve their training? How do their salaries compare at the various levels with those of other public officials at equivalent levels?

Government reply

114. The "Professional Teachers" programme provides training for baccalaureate-holders passing through the teacher-training system in December, January, February, June and July, allowing them to obtain a teaching qualification. At present, more than 2,000 baccalaureate-holders are working under this programme in remote and isolated areas of the country. The teacher-training institutions produce some 3,000 qualified teachers every three years.

115. Decision No. 30/98, promulgated recently, authorizes the involvement of these students in courses or teaching practice in order to fill all available teaching posts.

116. The measures taken for this purpose were:

Introduction of a national admission test, requiring a grade of at least 70 per cent, for teacher training;

Establishment of 11 teacher-training institutes (5 State, 6 private) in Asunción, Yataity, Quiindy, Yuty, Santa Rosa (Misiones), Fernando de la Mora, Itá, Lima, Guarambaré and Capiata;

Development and professional training, through modular training courses and distance learning, of 2,850 teachers working in secondary schools without professional qualifications;

Operation of 47 professional training centres with 141 sections and 5,781 participants;

Training of 1,300 area directors and local supervisors and 11,900 fourth-grade teachers and heads. Shortly, fifth and sixth-grade teachers will also be involved and will have to prepare for the educational reform;

Training of 1,200 secondary-school heads and supervisors and 12,000 teachers at the basic stage of the middle level;

Introduction of a specialized management and administration course for 600 local education authority directors and heads and coordinators of secondary schools. This is being developed in six departments: Concepción, San Pedro, Alto Paraná, Guairá, Canindeyú and Itapúa;

Setting-up of a national institute to oversee implementation of the educational reform in the first cycle of basic education in official private schools. This would be carried out by the Educational Research and Experimentation Unit of the Dr. Raúl Peña Higher Institute of Education;

Re-opening of the specialized teacher-training courses at the Higher Institute of Education and in San Juan Bautista, (Misiones), the latter in collaboration with the San Juan Rural Teachers' Association;

Stronger management by supervisors and local education authorities in order to improve teachers' performance and results, and hence the quality of education;

Teacher selection by regional committees, as a means of decentralizing education;

Courses on school management for supervisors and heads in local education authorities of the departments of Alto Paraná, Canindeyú, Concepción, Itapúa, San Pedro and Amambay;

Retraining of teachers in mother-tongue education with the help of basic education specialists through Guaraní language courses;

Reinforcement of the learning chain, with training for trainers;

Environmental training and education for trainers and supervisors in the capital and Central department in subjects such as waste treatment and improving quality of life;

Participation of supervisors and heads in the development of the project entitled "Improving the Quality of Secondary Education", intended to improve links with basic education;

Training for teachers in the educational reform, to be effected by heads;

Training for heads in the education reform, to be effected by trainers;

Production of a manual for the implementation of the "Innovative Educational Projects" and materials for training heads and project coordinators.

117. As regards the comparison of teachers' salaries with those of other public officials, both are set according to established categories for each grade. The minimum salary is equivalent to 250 United States dollars, and this can rise to approximately 500 dollars. It is true that in certain outlying areas teachers' salaries are below the minimum, because resources are insufficient to pay equal salaries throughout the country: this is one reason why there is a shortage of teaching staff, since they prefer to move to the capital in search of a better standard of living.

Committee's observation

Please provide information on the importance attached to the teaching of human rights in the country's educational system (primary, secondary and university), and especially in the training of members of the armed forces and police.

Government reply

118. As part of the educational reform, human rights were included in democratic education in order to create a culture of respect for human dignity in the universal context, provide a moral education with values such as honesty, social justice, tolerance, solidarity and respect, create attitudes of perseverance and fortitude in the face of difficulty, and develop creativity geared towards producing alternative solutions.

119. This teaching process ranges from teacher training to the education of parents of pupils so as to encourage them to support their children's education. Thus the educational process encompasses both home and school environments in order to preserve continuity and effectiveness.

120. At the university level, the Faculty of Law and Social Sciences of the National University of Asunción has had, since 1994, a fourth-year module in human rights, with an hour's teaching twice a week. The aim of the course is to provide young people with a knowledge of all the international human rights instruments, their historical origin and importance, an analysis of each article and the consideration of reports, examining their applicability to the Paraguayan situation, among others.

121. As regards police officers, the General Eduvigis Díaz Police Academy has a department of human rights which provides instruction on the content of international instruments for the protection of fundamental rights. Concerning the armed forces, there is no indication that they have received any human rights training.

122. A project entitled "Educating young people in a culture of peace" is soon to be implemented. It is aimed at:

(a) Reinforcing the democratic process in Paraguay by raising public awareness of respect for human rights and restoring the universal values which lie at the heart of a culture of peace;

(b) Contributing to a constant search for a society with the desire and vocation to build a culture of peace, influencing public opinion on the subject.

123. This project will be carried out by the Directorate-General for Human Rights in collaboration with the Office of the First Lady of the Nation and with financing from UNESCO. Its implementation is planned for 1999; certain measures have already been taken, such as, for example, the training of technical advisers, who are in charge of making the teaching appointments, and selecting schools through the Ministry of Education.

124 It is hoped to directly involve some 3,840 fourth, fifth and sixth-grade pupils of State schools in Greater Asunción and the Central Department, and some 240 teachers from the same areas. Indirectly, it is hoped that the programme will reach at least 9,000 people in pupils' families, student centres and society generally

Committee's observation

Please provide information on the steps taken to facilitate access by adults to the benefits of education: opportunities offered to them in literacy campaigns, to complete studies, to begin other studies, etc., within the official system or under other systems or educational programmes.

Government reply

125. The education reform has included the concept of "continuing education", in the sense of a process of updating or refreshing adults' education, generally through afternoon or evening classes targeted at providing basic education, literacy and training to persons aged over 15 who for various reasons, be they income, delays, temporary absence from the system or early employment, were not able to benefit from primary education. The concept of "continuing" education refers as much to the duration as to the opportunities for access and development which should be available to all persons in terms of education.

126. However, this level is not expanding greatly: in 1995, most students opted for basic education (completion of primary education) and, to a lesser degree, vocational training and literacy. In practice, most students (70 per cent) are young people between the ages of 15 and 19. It is in the basic education subprogramme that the largest proportion of this age group are enrolled, with a clear predominance of men (66 per cent) over women (34 per cent).

127. As regards basic education for adults, 46.7 per cent of enrolment is concentrated in Asunción and the departments of Central and Alto Paraná. This is a sign of inequality for young people in other departments who do not have the same access to continuing education programmes. The gender breakdown is almost equal (47.4 per cent men and 45.4 per cent women).

128. In the vocational training subprogramme, the proportion of students aged 15 to 19 was about 75 per cent in 1995, again with male predominance (52.7 per cent as against 47.3 per cent for women), but with a much smaller gap than in the basic education subprogramme. As to the geographical distribution of the vocational training subprogramme, it is even more heavily concentrated than the basic education subprogramme, but in different departments. Thus, Asunción and the departments of Central (particularly advantaged) and Cordillera account for some 57 per cent of enrolments, with a higher proportion of women (59 per cent) than men (56 per cent).

129. The literacy subprogramme also has a high percentage of students aged 15-19, but they make up a smaller proportion (67 per cent) than in the other subprogrammes, though the proportion of men is the highest at 71.4 per cent. The small proportion of adult women entering literacy programmes is a result of traditional attitudes which regard the education of women as unnecessary (especially for the older age groups); and it must also be borne in mind that female participation in the vocational training subprogramme is high, at 59 per cent. This means that, as far as literacy is concerned, young women who have left the educational system have greater difficulty in re-entering it. Possible reasons vary, from the lack of

importance attached to women's literacy to having children at an early age; it is, however, clear that the Ministry of Education's vocational training programmes are of greater interest to women.

130. As regards geographical distribution, full information is not available for the literacy subprogramme, but the available data indicate that there are also differences leading to inequalities in enrolment between departments. Again, a considerable proportion (22 per cent) is concentrated in Asunción, which is followed by the departments of Amambay and Itapúa.

Committee's observation

Please provide information on the steps taken by the Government in the framework of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education.

Government reply

131. In the framework of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, as mentioned above, the "Educating young people in a culture of peace" project has been set up as a government initiative for the promotion of, and education in, human rights.

Committee's observation

Please provide information on associations, organizations or other group movements working in collaboration to raise the cultural level of the country's most disadvantaged groups and on the assistance granted to them by the Government or other authorities at the local level.

Does Paraguay have associations of adults drawn from universities or the world of work who voluntarily offer their knowledge and experience with a view to raising the cultural level of the country through seminars, conferences, etc.?

Government reply

132. Paraguay has organizations and adult associations which, through courses, conferences and talks, aim to raise the cultural level of the most disadvantaged groups. Examples are:

(a) The Santo Tomás Educational Community, which, with a study programme laid down by the Ministry of Education, offers students facilities to do their homework with support from specially trained teachers, in order to lend continuity to school education and to give help in the subjects most important to children, according to individual needs. In addition, the Centre offers classes in spelling, calligraphy, English, computing, dance, Guaraní, tae kwon do, physical education and sports in general as additional or compulsory subjects, together with courses in electricity, carpentry and refrigeration. The Centre has 300 students, who have access to numerous reference materials in the library. Next year, it is planned to provide a qualification in automobile mechanics for technical baccalaureate holders, in order to expand the qualifications they already possess, such as the diesel

engine course certificate. It should be noted that the Centre offers its services for a very small registration fee since it is targeted at the most disadvantaged groups.

(b) San Sebastian Educational Centre: Future professional teachers set up this Centre on 11 March 1998. It consists of a team of qualified teachers providing education at the following levels: pre-primary, pre-school, primary, basic, baccalaureate in humanities and sciences, technical baccalaureate in business administration with computing, and technical baccalaureate in book-keeping with computing. It has three shifts: morning, afternoon and evening. Its aim is to train young people in such a way that, when they finish their studies, they will immediately be able to find work. In 1999, it is planned to expand the baccalaurate options, with technical courses in health, industrial chemistry, electrical engineering and electronics. The Centre's motto is "Excellence in Education for MERCOSUR" and at present it has 450 students. Like the Santo Tomás Centre, it charges only a small sum to cover a few costs, being targeted towards the most disadvantaged groups.

(c) Municipal Social Affairs Office: With support from the Dequení and Cenadi organizations and the Jazmín Foundation (bodies funded by the Office of the President of the Republic), training courses are organized for parents of children working as beggars in the street; the workshop is named "From Needs to Rights". The course seeks to make parents aware of the need to stop their children begging by providing them with means to earn the money needed for life's essentials: at the end of the course, the parents are provided with trolleys, so that they can work selling some easily saleable product. The programme includes items on personal care, basic information on the prevention of illness and sex education. In addition, the mothers will have medical tests such as cervical smears and other cancer screening entirely free of charge.

(d) The Centre for Education, Guidance, Training and Culture runs a comprehensive training programme for professionals at the national level, targeted at the middle and upper management of educational institutions. The programme ran from 18 April to 20 June 1998. It was taught by university lecturers from Spain, Chile, Uruguay and Argentina, and dealt with morals, creativity in the classroom, curriculum management, organization, conflicts in educational establishments, the need for sex education in the context of the educational reform, and institutional and ideological educational projects. The course, targeted at all interested professionals, was free of charge.

(e) The Centre for Psychological Assistance runs an ongoing series of workshops for children in grades one to six with reading and writing difficulties. The classes run year-round with two one-hour classes a week. The workshops are taught by qualified specialists in educational psychology and a substantial fee is charged, which the parents pay monthly.

Associations, foundations, agreements

133. The cooperation agreement between the Salesian Centre for Minors and the Secretariat for Social Welfare within the Office of the President of the Republic: Within the framework of the "Training for young workers on the streets" project, training in silk-screen printing is being given to some

20 young people between ages 14 and 18 from marginal districts. The project is designed to broaden their opportunities and improve their conditions of access to skills training which will enable them to find work. The training given is entirely free of charge.

134. Since March 1998, teachers of social studies in the city of Concepción have been organizing training and refresher courses within the framework of the educational reform. The subjects taught include history, geography, and civic and moral education. In view of the warm reception accorded to similar activities which they have organized since last year, the teachers are planning the creation of an association which would organize short teacher training courses throughout the country.

135. On 13 September 1998, the second major Solidarity Walk in support of programmes for boys, girls and adolescents working on the streets took place. It was organized by the Dequení Foundation (an abbreviation of the Spanish version of the biblical phrase: "Suffer little children to come unto Me") and UNICEF, and was supported by a number of enterprises and student centres in different colleges. The work of the Foundation relates to self-management programmes; it does not provide direct assistance. The enterprises with a sense of social responsibility which support events of this kind are Citibank, Diners, Personal, Telecel, Coca-Cola, Colgate-Palmolive Paraguay, the Autonomous University and Salemma.

136. On 10 August 1998, the Comprehensive Health for Adolescents Foundation (Funsia) was set-up. Its aim is to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of adolescents through information, education and communication activities in fields such as health, work, recreation, culture, art, and the environment. Its work is based on the principle of gender equality, and it promotes comprehensive health programmes and equality of access to assistance and prevention services. Its work also includes the organization, administration, direction and evaluation of projects for the provision of various services, integrated on a multidisciplinary basis, in the field of reproductive health. Its responsibilities also include the design, development and evaluation of research projects on matters relating to adolescence and scientific and technical cooperation with official and private institutions and national and international non-governmental organizations. Its remit further includes the development of programmes relating to education, and the prevention of drug addiction, smoking, violence, alcoholism, delinquency, early pregnancy, abortion, sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS among adolescents.

137. The "Hay un niño en tu camino" ("There's a child in your street") Foundation was created in 1992, with the support of the Secretariat for Social Welfare within the Office of the President of the Republic, to promote self-respect, education and advancement among boys and girls with modest means. It is conducting programmes in the fields of nutrition, health, education, vocational training for young persons and support for families to ensure that the beneficiaries do not work on the streets. According to an evaluation conducted in 1997 concerning 70 boys and girls studying within the Foundation, only seven failed their first-grade examinations there were no failures in other grades, none of the boys and girls dropped out and the majority of them improved their school performance.

138. In November 1997, the Jóvenes Unidos por Amor a Cristo (Youth united by love of Christ - JUCRI), an association with a membership of over 50, founded a club in the city of Pilar for working boys and girls with the aim of cooperating with the most disadvantaged groups in the community. To that end the association is offering psychological support services to persons working on the streets and providing nutritious food. It has formed groups to handle the different types of responsibility - sports, sickness, boys and girls, culture and recreation.

139. On 21 June 1997, the Mother Teresa Zavata hostel was inaugurated. This is a social welfare institution looked after by the past pupils of Las Teresas School for girls with the support of the Dequení Foundation. Its function is to look after boys and girls in need. There are currently 55 boys and girls living in the hostel, together with two teachers and a social worker. It provides the following services: care and attention, food, medical care and vocational guidance, education (help with school work), catechism, recreation and hygiene. It is also undertaking projects with the Asunción municipal authorities and establishing local committees. In addition, the nursery education project proposes to provide preparatory, stimulatory, educational and training services for boys and girls between ages of 3 and 6 who come from marginal or risk-fraught areas.

140. The Children's Sanctuary Foundation, in the Infant Jesus of Praga parish, is currently making the necessary adjustments to establish a tree nursery of forest and ornamental plants which will be used for educational purposes for over 40 children previously living on the streets. The scheme forms part of the project financed by the Secretariat for Social Welfare (Office of the President of the Republic). It is hoped that, by means of this training in looking after a tree nursery, conducting guided tours for the public and working in groups, the children will acquire not only new knowledge and manual skills but also the habit of developing positive relationships, such as those of cooperation and teamwork and of respect and kindness towards individuals and the environment. The direct beneficiaries of the scheme are 42 children and adolescents of both sexes who worked, or were living, on the streets. Thirty-one of them (12 girls and 19 boys, aged between 4 and 14) are living in the home; the other 10 are poor children living in the community. There are also indirect benefits for the families of these boys and girls and inhabitants of the immediately surrounding area. The project contains provision for the promotion of tree planting in local districts in order to stimulate relationships among neighbours and protection of the environment.

141. A group of teachers is organizing a workshop (known as "Mandala, arts, expression, education") for teachers and for boys, girls and adolescents; it started to function on 5 May 1998. Its aim is to offer scope for self-expression and creativity where individuals can find books and music, and also materials and tools to facilitate creative activities forming part of the process of education for boys, girls, adolescents and adults. The courses offered by the workshops for boys and girls between ages 6 and 12 include: elementary guitar lessons; a workshop for self-expression; story-telling and initiation into interest in literature; drawing; painting; and music. The subjects covered in the workshops for teachers include pre-school plastic education, expression and creativity, guitar playing and singing, rhythmics at

school and modular workshops for work in plastics. Attendance at the workshops is not free; persons attending must pay fees, but these are set at reasonable levels to enable persons of modest means to attend.

142. Last year the Dequení Foundation launched a project comprising education, comprehensive training, nutrition and assistance with school work for boys and girls selling candles at Caacupé Basilica. The programme, which is known as the Casa del Niño, enables boys and girls to engage in educational activities, group picnics, games and domestic cleanliness exercises and to watch educational videotapes. It enables them to improve their relationships with one another as well as their working conditions. To these ends they have agreed to sell their candles at standard prices, to obtain jackets by which they can be identified and to go to a football training school every Saturday. To maintain these activities in being, appeals for voluntary contributions to help these boys and girls have been addressed to the general public. The donations received so far cover only part of basic maintenance needs; consequently events are being organized to raise more funds.

143. On 8 June 1998, the Latin American Vocational Rehabilitation Group and the APADEM-TELETON Foundation, with support from the Spanish Cooperation Agency, started a week-long workshop on the "Identification and training of leaders and persons exercising responsibilities in organizations of disabled persons". The purpose of the workshop was to train disabled persons in order to strengthen the element of self-management in the institutions to which they belong, to promote their direct participation in the management and administration of organizations of all types in the area, and to identify priority fields of action in the light of national realities. The seminar consisted of three modules. The first related to basic leadership techniques, and the second to the organization and management of associations of physically disabled persons, while the third designed projects.

144. In March 1997, a number of cultural events were organized for the benefit of the most vulnerable groups. One example was the recital given by the Argentine singer Teresa Parodi and by Louisa Calcumil, which was organized by the National Peasant Federation and the La Marca publishing group to bring the urban and rural elements of the community together through the medium of music and popular song. As a rule, no entrance fee was charged for these events; the members of the public who attended made donations of non-perishable foodstuffs and clothing to be distributed to peasant groups.

Secretariat for Women

145. On 9 March 1998, the Secretariat for Women within the Office of the President of the Republic signed an agreement with the National Vocational Promotion Service (SNPP), valid for one year, on the dissemination of the concept of equality of opportunity in the labour market. In response to requests from the most vulnerable groups, a number of women were selected for training. The selection was made on a nationwide basis through branch offices of the SNPP in the provinces. Files on women trained under this programme are now available with a view to monitoring their progress and coordinating other activities of the Secretariat for Women, departmental governments and the institutional support network. Simultaneously with the conclusion of this agreement, the two bodies conducted a seminar-workshop on "Gender relationships in vocational training". This event was intended for managers,

instructors and officials in the SNPP as part of the task of awareness development with a view to the incorporation of the gender perspective into the conduct of vocational and skills training programmes.

146. During April 1998, a project was launched to give training in ceramics and other handicrafts to over 60 inmates of Buen Pastor women's prison and 20 young persons from the Rosa Virginia hostel. It is hoped that this activity will subsequently provide a potential source of income for the participants. In addition to the training workshops, the scheme provides for talks on self-esteem, rights within the family (women, boys and girls) and reproductive health. In view of the success of the project, the British Embassy in Paraguay decided to support it, enabling the inmates to have their own furnace. It is hoped that by the end of the programme this activity will lead to the preparation of a strategy to make the workshop financially self-supporting and to market its products.

147. With the creation of the Support Unit the programme entitled "Initiative and development centres for women" was launched. Its aim is to improve the living conditions of women, increasing their active participation in the country's development. The principal beneficiaries of the project are women, preferably from rural areas. To give effect to that preference it is planned to establish 14 initiative and development centres in the interior of the country. Comprehensive support is offered in the field of legal advice on matters relating to domestic violence, family relationships and property ownership for women.

148. In addition, short training courses were organized with the support of the IDB for women in leadership positions in the interior in the departments of Paraguarí and Ñeembucú and in the town of Valle Apua-Lambaré.

Committee's observation

Please provide information on the steps taken to promote the dissemination of scientific progress and its applications.

Government reply

149. Article 74, paragraph 2, of the Constitution reads as follows: "The right to learn and to have equal opportunities of access to the benefits of humanistic culture, science, and technology without any discrimination is guaranteed."

150. Article 76 stipulates: "The State shall promote secondary, technical, agricultural, industrial, and higher or university education, and also scientific and technological research."

151. Article 82 reads: "Objects, publications and activities of significant value for purposes of cultural dissemination and education shall not be subject to fiscal or municipal taxes. The law shall regulate these exemptions and establish a system of incentives for introducing and incorporating into the country the necessary elements for the practice of the arts and of scientific and technological research, and also for their dissemination within the country and abroad."

152. In addition to the legislative measures mentioned earlier, the Government has taken the following steps.

153. The National Institute of Technology and Standardization (INTN) has undertaken as a priority task the establishment and implementation of a national quality system and the maintenance of national and regional standards in the following fields: agro-industry, building, electricity, iron and steel, environmental management and quality. In 1997, the Institute was designated the official certification body for purposes of the implementation of the Quality Improvement and Productivity Promotion Programme. To that end Paraguayan specialists have been given training on 23 courses covering agro-industry, leathergoods and footwear, ceramics, textiles, and protection and monitoring of the environment. The courses were attended by 520 external participants in all.

154. The INTN also has information on the standards and regulations of every country in the world. To facilitate their understanding by all interested persons (who have free access to them), they have been compiled on paper or on electronic media. Furthermore, since 1996 the Institute has been a member of the International Organization for Standardization and the International Organization of Legal Metrology. It thus receives all up-to-date international information on Standardization and the worldwide certification system.

155. The INTN has signed the following agreements and conventions:

(a) In 1997, an agreement was concluded with the Faculty of Chemical Sciences of the National University of Asunción for the conduct of research into the development of a procedure for the manufacture of paper pulp from non-traditional materials and for the development of postgraduate and other courses in different areas of responsibility of the Institute;

(b) An agreement has been concluded with the central government authorities on the organization of courses and workshops for workers in ceramics, as a means of disseminating modern technologies and thereby improving the quality of ceramics production;

(c) An outline agreement on cooperation in the fields of standardization, product certification, services and metrology has been concluded with the Association française de normalisation (AFNOR);

(d) Technical replies have been given to 152 requests for advice from members of the public and private sectors. Work of this kind consists mainly of office research, including the search for, and reading and interpretation of, available information on the subject of the request at both national and international levels;

(e) Two hundred and forty reports were prepared with comments and recommendations. They were based on field work (visits to enterprises and sites, verifications, certifications, etc.), undertaken in response to requests by members of the public and private sectors within Paraguay, following the preparation of programmes of work by officials of the Institute and the subsequent acceptance of the proposal by the currently responsible official;

(f) Training was given to 68 officials by organizing their participation in 221 technical events at both the national and international levels.

156. In addition, a new organizational structure was established within which particular mention should be made of the formation, in 1997, of a Department of the Environment and a Project Coordination Unit. The latter assists small and medium-sized enterprises in the search for, and application of, low-cost techniques for the treatment of effluent and the use of clean technologies.

157. Mention may also be made of the planning and setting-up of a network for the measurement of total daily solar radiation, consisting of six stations situated in strategic locations in various parts of the country. The information obtained will enable rational use to be made of solar energy. And reference should be made to the construction, installation and entry into service of the solar desalination plant in the town of Mariscal Estigarribia in the Paraguayan Chaco.

158. The textile project ended successfully with an extremely favourable evaluation by a mission from the Japan International Cooperation Agency in December 1996, and the establishment of the Textile Research Centre to conduct research and provide services in the textile sector. It thus became the INTN's first research centre.

159. The eight-volume "El ABC de la Tecnología", financed by the Organization of American States under the "Assistance to small and medium-sized enterprises" project, was published. It will be distributed to associations of enterprises as reference material concerning the possibilities of improving their competitiveness that technology can offer them. In addition, volumes 3 and 4 of the Revista Textiles were published with the assistance of the Japanese International Cooperation Agency. They contain practical information on new technologies in that field.

160. In the field of agro-industry, training was provided during 1997 for small farmers and their families by means of technical meetings and talks on producer organization, seed production, forestry nurseries, chicken and egg production, health care for small animals, milk production, artificial insemination, management and conservation of natural resources, home industries, manual skills and handicrafts, consumer stores, reproductive health, environmental health, the preparation of vegetable fertilizers, crop rotation, direct sowing, diversification of production, nutrition and food preparation, bee-keeping, floriculture, fish farming, maté, cotton, sugar cane, horticulture, manioc and sweet potatoes. In all, 174,315 farmers attended the courses.

161. Training was given to livestock-producers in subjects such as production techniques, the improvement and handling of cattle, the production of cattle and goats, pig farming, bee-keeping, fishing and water resources development, pasture, fodder, and poultry and rabbit farming.

162. As regards health, during 1997 the National Health Institute made substantial efforts in the training and skills development of technicians in that sector. In all, 994 technicians in health education, nursing, obstetrics, laboratory work and pharmacy were trained. Training courses were

organized for public health specialists (30 students, of whom 17 successfully completed the courses). A course for hospital administrators was also held; it was attended by 35 students of both sexes. During 1996, 21 professionals were trained in health services management.

163. In the field of education, as a result of the educational reform (which has now reached the sixth grade), electronic data processing is now being taught at various levels (according to grade) to both boys and girls, and periodical evaluations are effected. In addition, the daily newspaper Ultima Hora contains weekly supplements making up a home study course in electronic data processing.

Committee's observation

Please indicate the steps taken (of a legislative or other nature) to guarantee every person's right to benefit from the protection of the moral and material interests arising from any work of art, whether scientific or literary, of which he is the author. In what way are these rights protected where members of ethnic groups are concerned?

Government reply

164. The legislation governing copyright is contained in Title VII of the Civil Code "Concerning literary, scientific and artistic property". Article 2,165 reads: "Scientific, literary and artistic creations enjoy the protection conferred by the present Code. The author is the owner of his work during his lifetime, and his right of ownership subsists for 50 years, as from the date of his death, in favour of his heirs universal or singular or, in the absence thereof, of any person or persons who have, by deed inter vivos or under testamentary provision, been assigned the task of publishing his work."

165. Article 2,166 provides that: "For the purposes of the previous article, the author of a literary, scientific or artistic work is deemed to be the person who creates it, or that person's heirs universal or particular, regardless of whether the work is published under the name of the author or under a pseudonym. Publication of an anonymous work, or a work bearing a pseudonym, creates a presumption that the publisher is the owner of the rights arising from the legitimate publication of that work, unless evidence to the contrary is produced by the creator of the work within the three years following its publication. Works by public officials or by persons employed in private enterprises which are the outcome of work inherent in their duties (with the exception of works created by members of the teaching staff of educational institutions, even though they relate to lessons for their pupils) are the property of the State or of the employer."

166. Article 2,167 states: "The right of literary, scientific or artistic property protected by the present Code may not be renounced, transferred or sold; however, the economic value or commercial exploitation of the work may be transmitted entirely or in part by deed inter vivos or by testamentary provision. This rule applies equally to signed contributions to compilations or collective works, even if it is another person who, on publication of those works, presents them as coordinated under a single leadership. In such cases the editor, or the director of the compilation, has the sole right of

reproduction and sale thereof; each contributor may reproduce his work separately, subject to the condition of indicating the work or compilation from which it has been taken."

167. Article 2,168: "The State, through its bodies responsible for scientific research and the dissemination of culture, and foundations and associations pursuing ends of general interest, enjoy patrimonial rights over works of intelligence or ingenuity which they may, for the above ends, compile and publish at their own expense, subject to the rights of authorship of the persons who have contributed to those works."

168. Article 2,170: "Subject to the limits provided for in the present Code, the artists, authors or interpreters of artistic or literary works, even when the latter have passed into the public domain, are entitled to fair compensation for such interpretation from the persons who disseminate or transmit those works by any medium suitable for sound or visual reproduction. This payment shall be due independently of that due for the actual recitation, representation or performance. Authors, artists and interpreters have the right to oppose any dissemination, transmission or reproduction which may be injurious to their honour or reputation."

169. Article 2,175: "The author of a cinematographic film shall enjoy the protection of the present Code, without prejudice to the copyright attaching to the work adapted or reproduced. A person who obtains the original photographic image of a panorama, landscape or view shall also, as owner of that image, enjoy all the rights conferred on artistic production by the present Code."

170. Article 2,176: "If a work has been created by two or more authors and it is impossible to define the part produced by each of them, all of them shall enjoy equal rights over the work, unless otherwise agreed. The publication of the work shall be effected by mutual agreement. In the event of disagreement, the courts shall rule. If one of the contributors dies without leaving heirs, his rights shall accrue to the survivors."

171. Article 2,177: "Text and music in artistic works are deemed to be separate creations. The author of a libretto or a written composition set to music shall have the sole right to print, or have printed, and to sell copies of, his literary work separately from the music and to authorize or prohibit the execution or public performance of his libretto. The composer of the musical work shall enjoy the same right."

172. Article 2,180: "The following are not deemed infringements of copyright:

(a) The reproduction of passages or sections of works already published and the insertion, even in their entirety, of small compositions by another author within the body of a larger work, provided that the source and the names of the authors are given;

(b) The reproduction in the press of news items and articles devoid of literary or scientific character which have been published in other newspapers or periodicals, provided that the names of their authors and of the periodicals from which they have been transcribed are given;

(c) A reference in books, newspapers or reviews to sections of any work for purposes of criticism or polemic;

(d) A handwritten copy of any work, provided that it is not destined for sale, and the reproduction within the body of a written composition of artistic drawings by another person, provided that the written text is the principal element, that the drawings serve only to explain the text and that the name of the author of the work is indicated."

173. Article 2,182: "An author or owner whose work has been counterfeited may require that the reproduced copies be placed under embargo and seek damages from the author of the counterfeit until the counterfeited edition is exhausted, this without prejudice to criminal proceedings."

174. Article 2,183: "The author has the sole right to publish his work and to exploit it economically in any form or manner, subject to the restrictions, and for the purposes, specified in the present Code. Even after transferring these rights, the author may claim authorship of the work and oppose any deformation, mutilation or other change in that work if it is injurious to his honour and reputation. Rights of economic exploitation are transferable. Transfers by deed inter vivos must be proved in writing."

175. Article 2,184: "The entry of literary, scientific or artistic works published in the Republic in the Registry of Intellectual Property Rights shall be a condition for the protection of copyright vis-à-vis third parties under the present Code. To this end the author or the publisher, as the case may be, shall deposit two copies of the work. The same requirement shall apply to works printed abroad but published in the Republic. For paintings, architectural works, sculptures and other works of art, the object deposited shall be a sketch or photograph of the original, together with supplementary information permitting its identification. For cinematographic films, the deposit shall consist of a statement of the plot, dialogues, photographs and some of the principal scenes."

176. Article 2,185: "The person who registers a work and provides the necessary copies shall be issued a receipt specifying the information, dates and circumstances which serve to identify the work and certifying registration. Certificates of registration issued in this way create a presumption of ownership of the work, unless otherwise proved."

177. A law governing copyright is at present being considered by the Executive for approval or rejection. In this law copyright is fully protected. Direction and supervision are to be transferred to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, which, in the view of certain senators, is in a better position to ensure compliance with the legislation and the defence of intellectual property and to combat large-scale piracy on account of pressures exerted by large enterprises.

178. As regards members of ethnic groups, no measures exist other than those mentioned. The latter apply to all inhabitants of the Republic without distinction. Article 63 of the Constitution stipulates: "The right of indigenous peoples to preserve and develop their ethnic identities in their respective habitats is recognized and guaranteed. They also have the right freely to apply their systems of political, social, economic, cultural and

religious organization and voluntarily to observe customary practices for the regulation of their domestic coexistence, provided that none of them runs counter to the fundamental rights established in this Constitution. In conflicts of jurisdiction, account shall be taken of indigenous customary law."

Notes

1/ School of the Future: An agreement with the United States for bilingual (Spanish-Guaraní) education, individualized teaching, moral values and the introduction of computerized learning. There are currently 13 educational institutions conducting this programme, covering a total of 1,217 participants in Asunción, Caacupé, Itapúa, Capiata, Luque, Encarnación, Misiones, Pilar, Curuguaty, Coronel Oviedo and Ayolas.

Active School: Joint Ministry of Education/IDB/UNICEF programme for the improvement of educational quality. Appropriate teaching materials enable pupils in the programme to take control of their learning, while the teacher becomes a facilitator. The children learn through modules, which they may interrupt and resume at their own pace, in a process geared to the situation of rural children during harvest periods.

Source: Information provided by the Department of Basic School Education, Ministry of Education.

2/ Source: 1997 Report of the Executive Branch.

3/ Source. Press Archive of the Directorate-General for Human Rights.

4/ Source: Health sector analysis, Review of the Strategic Plan for Social Development.

5/ Source: UNICEF-Paraguay, 1995-1999 Mid-Cooperation Period Review.

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Annex 1: Legislative instruments

1. Civil Code, Act No. 805/96
2. National Constitution
3. Copyright Act
4. General Education Act (No. 1264/98)

Annex 2: Press cuttings

1. Child labour, 1997/98
2. Transfer of land to the indigenous communities
3. Associations 1997/98
4. Health 1997/98
5. Education 1997/98

Annex 3: Statistical data

1. Maternal and infant mortality
2. Child workers on the streets and their levels of education
3. Numbers of persons enrolled in pre-primary, basic and secondary education

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